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Applicant: David I.J. Glen
Application No.: 09/704,329

REMARKS

All claims 1-30 stand rejected as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,592,556 (Schwed). Several attempts to arrange a telephone conference to discuss this rejection have not been successful. A telephone interview with Examiner Jackson and supervisor Examiner Sheikh is respectfully requested.

In the latest action, the Examiner contends that "Schwed discloses write protection enablement, because the transmission of Schwed is encrypted in order to protect against eavesdroppers (see col. 9, lines 22-25)."

The pending claims are essentially related to the prevention of tampering with encryption keys, not merely encryption. For example claim 1 requires:

said specific write-protectable area being rendered read-only only when a predetermined flag value is stored at said flag address whereby encryption key data may be stored in said specific area of said non-volatile RAM in connection with storing said predetermined flag value at said flag address such that stored encryption data cannot be altered by a subsequent write operation to said non-volatile RAM.

It is not understood how the use of encryption in Schwed has any relationship to the specific type of write-protectable area claimed which locks a specific encryption key in the memory.

Schwed addresses the storing of encryption data. However, there is no disclosure of storing such data in a "specific write-protectable area" that contains a "flag address" which controls whether or not the area is read only.

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Schwed does not disclose such "specific write-protectable area" that is rendered "read-only only when a predetermined flag value is stored at said flag address" as set forth in the independent claims.

Until there is a predetermined flag values stored at the flag address, the "specific write-protectable area" remains available for encryption configuration; thereafter it is secured as read-only. Such a feature is not disclosed or suggested in Schwed.

With respect to claims 13-24, those claims are specifically directed to a video interface. Schwed makes no reference to video interfaces and the word video does not even appear in the Schwed patent. Accordingly, Schwed cannot anticipate claims 12-24.

As explained in the application on page 5, line 23 et seq., there may be more than one "predetermined flag value" that renders the "specific write-protectable area" as read-only. In the example, both "H" and "h" values can be used as a flag value to make the area read only.

This is also consistent with the limitations of, for example, dependent claim 3 which defines first and second predetermined flag values. Note that per claim 3, one predetermined flag value enables a particular encryption and the other predetermined flag value disables encryption altogether. In either case, the "specific write-protectable area" becomes read-only when one of the

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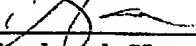
predetermined flag values is stored at the key flag address within the "specific write-protectable area."

Claims 4, 12, 16 and 24 cover the case where a "specific value" is initially stored at the key flag address within the "specific write-protectable area" to render that area "write enabled." Once any other value is stored at the key flag address, the "specific write-protectable area" becomes read-only per the limitations of claims 4, 12, 16 and 24. Schwed does not disclose or suggest control of a "specific write-protectable area" through the use of a key flag address within the area itself.

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the presently claimed invention is patentable over the prior art. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested. If the claims are not presently allowed, a telephonic interview is requested in advance of issuing any further adverse action.

Respectfully submitted,

David I.J. Glen

By 
C. Frederick Koenig III
Registration No. 29,662
(215) 568-6400

Volpe and Koenig, P.C.
United Plaza, Suite 1600
30 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
CFK/djw